

Zeitschrift: Trans : Publikationsreihe des Fachvereins der Studierenden am Departement Architektur der ETH Zürich
Herausgeber: Departement Architektur der ETH Zürich
Band: - (2023)
Heft: 43

Artikel: Euphonia
Autor: Freudenreich, Lida
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-1051773>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 18.02.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

«*The idea of a city, where everybody talks simultaneously and in succession, being understood by everybody else. Architectonics as a tuning device, a mechanic, to distinguish between noise and sound.*»

EUPHONIA

Lida Freudenreich

Lida Freudenreich, born 2000, studies architecture at ETH Zurich. She is currently working on projects across media, spanning from writing, to photography, to architecture. There are certainly more than 1001 voices in her head. Lida accessed xenotheka library through ask.alice-ch3n81.net to work with the voices of countless architects and writers. To articulate them in a new context.

PROLOGUE: DISSONANT SILENCE (fig. a)

Jack's(1) ears never recovered from the noise of Chinese cities, Tokyo and from all the airplanes. Everybody «talking at the same time»(2), always, everywhere. More noise than sound, an unconscious «subdued babble of conversation»(3), that «is alien to the resonating diversity of spoken words.»(4)

It is a «mad dance of distortions which follow no clear univocal logic, but form a patchwork of improvised connections.»(5) Is this «how the fluidities of trade are coming to dominate the planet?»(6)

Incredible though, how, «if noise is present, and chance becomes objective»(7) everything is possible.

And every time Jack closes his eyes there is a faint sound, of which the tune is slightly shifted, so that it gets «amplified and modified by the bones of [his] skull»(8). So that it resonates within.

For years he was convinced that it was a tinnitus, «the perpetual ringing of the ears that you can never switch off»(9), and that he'd rather be deaf. Until one day, more by chance than by accident, he attended an appointment in a private clinic in the Polish High Tatras. The day after his arrival, a foggy morning, Jack stepped out on the terrace, breathed in, closed his eyes to the contrast less gloomy than the noisy world and made «Vision and sound, heteronym and homonym, split off, run away from each other.»(10) And for a moment he forgot where he was. Suddenly the sound was louder than ever, still disturbing, but this time more like a rhythm in perfect sync with his philanthropic heartbeat.

Jack exclaimed, «kicking up his legs in an ecstasy. «Lord, that's the very thing!»(11)

A tune, which for him «had existed nowhere in the world until this morning.»(12) Jack was obsessed. His legs, in fact, his entire body, swinging in resonance, he descended the mountains. It was «the dance of renewal, the dance that made the world, [that] was always danced here at the edge of things»(13) and he was absorbed by the rhythmic reverberation. «He was so full of animal spirits that the people thought him mad.»(14)

For Jack «to recognize the mad was to recognize [him]self.»(15)

«This is what it must be like to approach an essential singularity.», Jack sighed, in exhaustion. It was like getting to know himself again. He had located the beautifully haunting tone, as if he had identified the oscillations, spirals, or fractal-like patterns at $x=0$ of $\exp(1/x)$.

And then, without warning, without being able to explain how, without even taking notice of passing the endlessness of «suburbia with phony respectability and genuine boredom effectively isolated from the world by traffic jams»(16), Jack entered.

There was a tremendous silence. For a moment, he was scared he «died before delivery.»(17), then «the morning of his prosperity was suddenly changed into the evening of bitterness and disappointment.»(18) as he realized that what he saw «looked nothing like a siren.»(19) All there was, were empty eyes and empty buildings, and silent people, trying to forget, communism, capitalism and all the rest.

Jack furiously ripped off his silken pajama shirt. All eyes and some cameras of Krakow gathered on his «naked upper torso revealing his intimidating *Thug Life* tattoos»(20) and the city revived in «noises, din, clamor, fury, tumult, and non-comprehension.»(21)

Jack, looking at the floor, expecting to have ruined his reputation «twice and twice by excess»(22), noticed a white piece of paper on the cobblestone. A wrinkled check of 2 bn that had liberated itself from his waistband. A divine angel to remind him not to have «fear of things that are but of little hindrance.»(23)

Finally, Jack remembered the reason why he had come and as confusion gave way to a new idea, he realized how with 2 bn, he could «render noise in song.»(24)

Reenergized and lucid, he declared what was unconscious commonsense: «Voices make sounds and noises.», and expanding on his insight, Jack delved into a more detailed explanation: «Noises, sounds and voices, «These are the three factors proper to the plane of consistency; [...] Now there is no hint in all of this of a chaotic white night or an undifferentiated black night. Our talking simultaneously and in succession, sometimes in total darkness, ends up as a well-ordered affair rather than a chaotic assembly of uncorrelated contributions.»(25) «Like jazz, it involves improvisation, and as in jazz, this does not mean that the result is accidental or that there are no rules.»(26)

TRANSCRIPT: POLYPHONIC RHAPSODY (fig. b)

one thousand people talking
and a talk

uttered
from
the uterus
of an
utterly
fluent language
or another

drip
«a hush falls»(27)
ding

«pearls, her teeth, a drink
water of her mouth»(28)

whispering
Vistula

breath out
condense
drip
write me a note

crack the glass
scatter communism
on the floor
capitalism in the air
invariance, resonance

«where the hell are we?
come on, dance»(29)

go, take a swim in the sand

«What kind of bird are you?»(30)
a moth

I want to see the light, I want to be the
light,
the noise,
Clonk
«like a confused daguerreotype»(31)

blinded,
by
bye, hi

Jack
Echo
Jacky

«a double conflagration»(32)
«as heavy as sin
as hot as blazes»(33)
«the burning one is eros»(34)
extinguish
distinguish

Octo-push
pull far wiser

«eat my words»(35)
«swallowing them whole live»(36)

«loveliness incarnate»(37)

«The stones,
the sounds,
the colours,
the human flesh and bones»(38)

the walls talk

raw?
tough!
wild?
hard!
stark?
throaty!

(27)
Carter, Shaking a Leg: Journalism and Writings, London 1997, p. 125.

(28)
One Thousand and One Nights.

(29)
Pete Brooks and Andrew Quick, «Cinema Inferno: Margiela Artisanal 2022 Collection», fashion show video.

(30)
Max Ernst, «Interrogation au second degré», in: Écritures, Paris 1970, n.p.

(31)
Karl Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, New York 1852, p. 74.

(32)
St. Jerome, Select Letters, trans. F. A. Wright, London 1933, p. 162.

(33)
Isaac Asimov, The Complete Robot Anthology: Forward the Foundation, New York 1993, p. 283.

(34)
Carl Jung, Memories Dreams Reflections, trans. Richard and Clara Winston, New York 1961, p. 153, Sermo IV.

(35)
Carl A. Zimring, Encyclopedia of Consumption and Waste: The Social Science of Garbage, Los Angeles 2012, Bd. 2, p. 1064.

(36)
Sean A. Day, «The Human Sensoria and a Synaesthetic Approach to Cooking», in: Reza Negarestani and Robin Mackay (eds.), Culinary Materialism (Collapse VII), Falmouth 2012, pp. 379—410, here p. 385.

(37)
Virginia Woolf, Orlando: A Biography, London 1928, p. 102.

(38)
Rosi Braidotti and Rick Dolphijn, Philosophy After Nature, London 2017, p. 167.



(fig. a) Film still from Werner Herzog,
«Lessons of Darkness», Germany/Kuwait, 1992



(fig. b) Film still from Karyn Kusama,
«Aeon Flux», United States, 2005



(fig. c) Film still from Spike Lee, «25th hour»,
United States, 2002

«confused the lobster with its shell» (39)
choke
I am a sponge,
Bonemarrow
dripping in oil
warm, white, wealthy
«a new color» (40)
«the shadow gathered» (41)
it
«no name [...]»
there never would be [...]»
rightly so» (42)
255, 0, 0
«Contraction» (43)
red
stop
green
go
«speed of light
turning gold to red
and silver to white» (44)
love
marry
«neither possession, nor command» (45)
«sound
and sick
confusedly together» (46)
they giggle
a scattered smile
his sporadic joy
her hick-up
their hook-up

«rather dead than spotted» (47)
rather seen and potted
in the finest porcelain
the ermine
Lady
I envy her
Ladyfinger
«First born unicorn
Hardcore soft porn» (48)
«With a heart and a half
awake and absolutely naked» (49)
«I waved to my neighbour
My neighbour waved to me» (50)
«pulled a long face and walked on
silently» (51)
«Idiot!»
he whispered.» (52)
«I kept waving my arms
Till I could not see» (53)
the «blind eyed purlieu» (54)
the moth
the silence
and security
could hear
clonk
the moth
the Ladybirds
singing
«where the hell are we?
come on, dance» (29)

(39)
John D. Kasarda and Greg
Lindsay, *Aerotropolis: The Way
Well Live Next*, London 2012,
p. 15.

(40)
Peter Handke, *Crossing the
Sierra de Gredos*, trans. Krishna
Winston, New York 2002, p. 127.

(41)
Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire*
(see note 31).

(42)
Handke, *Crossing the Sierra de
Gredos* (see note 40).

(43)
Albert Einstein, *The Meaning of
Relativity*, trans. Edwin Plimpton
Adams, London 1922, pp. 13–14,
18, 68, 79.

(44)
Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari,
*A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism
and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian
Massumi, Minneapolis 1987, p. 401.

(45)
Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*,
London 1651, p. 124.

(46)
Jules Michelet, *The History of
France*, vol. 2, trans. G. H. Smith,
New York 1882, p. 116.

(47)
Marianne Moore, *Complete
Poems*, London 1935, p. 160.

(48)
Red Hot Chili Peppers,
«Californication»,
Californication, 1999, song no. 6.

(49)
James Joyce, *Ulysses*, Paris 1922,
p. 131.

(50)
Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds,
«Fifteen Feet of Pure White
Snow», *No More Shall We Part*,
2001, song no. 5.

(51)
Joyce, *Ulysses* (see note 49).

(52)
Virginia Woolf, *Night and Day*,
London 1919, p. 31.

(53)
Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds,
«Fifteen Feet of Pure White
Snow» (see note 50).

(54)
Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life
of Great American Cities*, New
York 1961, p. 40.

EPILOGUE: BLUEPRINT OF EUPHONIA (fig. c)

This is what constitutes the environment for 1001 people talking. It is a stage for talking and a method of hearing. The unforgettable body of the city. The mechanics to distinguish between noise and sound.

1. THE WORD FAIR trades expressions.
 - 1.1. This is where the weird things get their names.
 - 1.2. It is not about trade but about the celebration of men's achievements, showing collective through the individual.
 - 1.3. It puts words and sentences into proportion.
 - 1.3.1. It is the exclamation point.
 - 1.3.2. A shouting of a number, the yelling of a product «is related to the experience as a cry is to pain.»(55)
 - 1.4. Merchants «name things and then we can talk about them: can refer to them in talk.
 - 1.4.1. Money talks' because money is a metaphor, a transfer, and a bridge. Like words and language, money is a storehouse of communally achieved work, skill, and experience.»(56)
2. The ALTAR OF FAULTY WORDS thinks of mistakes.
 - 2.1. «Man has the power to reverberate the Divine thunder.»(57)
 - 2.1.1. It sounds like confessions, whispering and melodic incantation.
 - 2.1.2. «They don't talk, but they do reveal.»(58)
 - 2.2. The faithful pile up offerings representing past mistakes.
 - 2.2.1. Namely shards of glass.
 - 2.2.2. Reminiscent of communism.
 - 2.3. «Sin is a gravitation.»(59)
 - 2.3.1. It has great potentiality. The more the better. Errors attract mistakes, attract silent faulty words, attract curse, attract sin.
 - 2.3.2. «The poison contains the antidote» and the foolish would think «Now I may have to eat my words.»(60)
 - 2.3.3. But «The fault is in the appetite, not the food itself.»(61) And «Appetite with an opinion of attaining, is called hope.»(62) And with a faulty appetite «Eve liberated us from a formatted paradise.»(63)
 - 3.1. The Parliament is two PLEONASTIC COUNSILS.
 - 3.2. It discusses «the discursive rules and customs of rhetoric, fiction, and dialectic,
 - 3.2.1. [...] they are all a part of the continuum of linguistic material that constitutes it, just as tune and rhythm are the means of representation for flute playing.»(64)
 - 3.3. It is the body of language.
 - 3.3.1. An agreement, «in the same sense about formal relations and structural relations.»(65)
 - 3.2.1. It happens, but it doesn't exist anymore. «But it is inside these forms — even if they too have now passed into oblivion — that the real work of the advancement»(66) of forgetting is done.

- 3.3. The councilors are «defined in terms of the faculty of forgetting and the power of acting reactions.»(67)
 - 3.3.1. Instead of carrying the name of their position, they carry the names of the most prominent figures before them. In Krakow: Krakus II, Bona Sforza II, Sigismund V, Wojtyla II, Majchrowski II, ...
 - 3.3.2. They dispute
 - 3.3.3. and eventually forget their «faculty of forgetting» to gain full power of acting reactions.
4. The HALL OF WASTED BREATH is an echo.
 - 4.1. It can't speak its own words, but instead only reflects the last words spoken.
 - 4.1.1. «Forced to remain motionless and always the same, in order to be more easily remembered»(68), the castle itself has long been forgotten.
 - 4.1.2. Here «offices (Titles) of Honor, by occasion of trouble, and for reasons of good and peaceable government, were turned into mere Titles; serving for the most part, to distinguish the precedence, place, and order of subjects [...] and men were made Dukes, Counts, Marquises, and Barons of Places, wherein they had neither possession, nor command.»(69)
 - 4.2. To save the city from «generic activity by which reactive forces are trained and tamed,»(70) all the wasted breath condenses on the castle's mirrors, the windows, the handrails and doorknobs.
 - 4.2.1. The castle is like the saliva valve of a trombone.
 - 4.2.2. As the centre of superfluity, it purges the city from fog. Guaranteeing optimal sound propagation for the rest.
 - 4.3. Breath creates another layer of language.
 - 4.3.1. «Names never reference static entities, but becoming.»(71)
 - 4.3.2. And so the castle becomes the book of the city. Uniting all architectural styles, from Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque to Oblivion.
5. The DEMENTIA DIP drowns one thought with the next.
 - 5.1. «As we learn, we must be daily unlearning something which it has cost us no small labor and anxiety to acquire»(72)
 - 5.2. The dressed swimmer «can't get to the bottom of his memory, down to the total and first oblivion. But when he surged naked from the bath in which he discovered the force that makes us float, he inverts Harlequin, overdressed, the way invention is opposed to memory.»(73)
 - 5.2.2. The bath hosts the liquified, naked act of forgetting. A bodily act. The sounds are the rhythmic splashes of water, hushes in the sweat room, gossip in the dressing.
 - 5.3. Plungers inhale and the oblivious float.

